

PATENT

D. REMARKS

Status of the Claims

Claims 1-3, 6-9, 12-16, 19, and 20 are currently present in the Application, and claims 1, 8, and 14 are independent claims. Claims 1, 6-8, 12-14, 19, and 20 have been amended, and claims 4, 5, 10, 11, 17, and 18 have been cancelled.

Drawings

Applicants note with appreciation the Examiner's acceptance of the formal drawings filed with the Application on May 24, 2001.

Allowable Subject Matter

The Examiner has objected to claims 5, 6, 11, 12, 18, and 19 as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but has stated that these claims would be allowable if rewritten in independent form, including all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

In order to expedite prosecution of the current Application, Applicants have amended independent claim 1 to include the limitations previously found in dependent claims 4 and 5, and have thus cancelled claims 4 and 5. Similarly, independent claim 8 has been amended to include the limitations previously found in dependent claims 11 and 12, and claims 11 and 12 have been cancelled. Similarly, independent claim 14 has been amended to include the limitations previously found in dependent claims 17 and 18, and claims 17 and 18 have been cancelled. As a result, Applicants respectfully submit that

PATENT

amended, independent claims 1, 8, and 14, and the claims which depend from them, are in condition for allowance.

Claim Rejections - Alleged Anticipation Under 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 1-4, 7, 8-10, 13-17, and 20, as originally filed, were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Perlman, U.S. Publication No. 2002/0099668 (hereinafter Perlman). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e), and respectfully submit that in view of the amendments discussed above, the rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) are now moot.

Claim Rejections - Alleged Obviousness Under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 2, 4, 9, 10, 15, and 17, as originally filed, were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Perlman in view of Doggett et al., U.S. Patent No. 5,677,955 (hereinafter Doggett). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a), and respectfully submit that in view of the amendments discussed above, the rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) are now moot.

Conclusion

As a result of the foregoing, it is asserted by Applicants that the remaining claims in the Application are in condition for allowance, and Applicants respectfully request an early allowance of such claims.

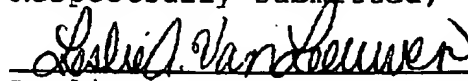
Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner contact the Applicants' attorney listed below if the Examiner believes

PATENT

that such a discussion would be helpful in resolving any remaining questions or issues related to this Application.

Respectfully submitted,

By



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